

Washington Initiatives for Oil Spill Preparedness

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The Washington State Legislature established a Spill Prevention, Preparedness and Response Program in early 1991. Funded from a tax on the movement of oil, the state's program focuses on:

- Vessel Spill Prevention (application of best achievable practices, elimination of human causal factors and intentional discharges, rescue tug and tug escorts).
- Facility Spill Prevention (prevention plans, operations manuals, training and certification of oil handling operators).
- Spill Preparedness (response plans to minimize the impacts of spills, drills to test response capability, and train and certify a state spill management team).
- Spill Response (contain and cleanup oil and hazmat spills 24 hours a day statewide, improve response technology, damage assessment that spillers pay to the state, habitat restoration).

Though there are many elements in the state's Spill program that complement the federal program, there are several key differences that provide a higher level of protection for this state. Spill prevention, preparedness and response activities are intertwined and interdependent. Washington's regulatory efforts protect our prized natural resources and state economy. This presentation highlights new policy and regulatory initiatives, and describes related research.